

Parish of Ferndown

Study sheet for week commencing 10th November 2008 The Life of Jacob (2) "Sibling Rivalry" Gen 27:1-10, 22-40

Alistair raised some important themes to be unpacked from this story. Using Genesis 27 and 28, let us see what these are.

(1) "Relationship Issues"

Within human relationships there can be real depravity: lies, scheming, deceit, cheating, rivalry and division, and murderous intent. It sounds like a soap opera, but it's actually happening amongst some of God's people!

- For those in the middle of family strife, what dark spiritual effect does it have on them?
- Satan had no hold (handle) on Jesus. How can we identify the handles in our lives that Satan tries to get hold of to use as a way in to mess up our lives? Where does repentance and restoration come in all of this?

(2) "Birthright and Blessing" (27: 1- 40)

Esau despised his birthright. Now he and his Father schemed a dark deed in a dark tent, but were deceived by a darker deed with a dark stew! In 27: 1-10 we see Isaac and Rebekah displaying favouritism and scheming. The result was that Isaac was deceived, and Rebekah never saw Jacob again.

- Why is truthfulness and transparency the best option in family life in the short and long term?
- Have we had parents that were truthful and transparent, or have they had some scheming tendencies? How has this affected the way we live life?

(3) "Grace and Rights"- Read 28:10-22.

Our culture is saturated with the language of "my rights."

- Why is this a dangerous way of looking at life when taken to extremes?
- When we have absolutely no rights (like Jacob in chapter 28) God still graciously reveals himself. Have we any personal stories of God speaking to us when we felt distant from him – when we had no rights in our own minds to be on speaking terms with God?
- Speak out some of the unconditional and gracious promises God made to Jacob. How do these inspire us?
- Jacob's vow in verse 20 seems rather like a "Plan B." Is it right or wrong to make deals with God on our terms? Why?

(4) **AND FOR YOUR PRAYER TIME... "God's Word and Power"**

Jacob got the blessing the wrong way but God still used this as his plan. God is in charge (his Sovereignty is displayed). When you have been hurt, or you have hurt others, there is a danger of thinking that the plan God has for you is over. This is a lie of the Devil, as God is still sovereign and can work in and through you! In your prayer time, take time to pray for the removal of the "handles" Satan uses, and ask God to replace them with fresh blessings (words only **OR** with the laying on of hands if this helps) and ask God to remind you that he is with you always.